

Marshal Loses Post In Soviet Over Spy

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MOSCOW, May 29—The Soviet Government disclosed tonight that Chief Marshal of Artillery Sergei S. Varentsov had been demoted because of his association with Oleg V. Penkovsky, the Soviet official executed as a spy for the West.

The 62-year-old officer, who was in charge of tactical and operational rocket forces, has been downgraded in rank and position. He was disciplined along with other senior officers.

The former marshal was accused of having assisted Penkovsky to obtain his post as deputy head of the foreign department of the State Committee for the Coordination of Scientific Research.

Penkovsky was convicted of espionage by the Military Collegium of the Supreme Court on May 1. His execution was announced five days later. Greville Gurney, a British businessman who confessed to having acted as a contact between Penkovsky and Western intelligence agencies, was sentenced to eight years' confinement.

Gen. Artem G. Gorny, the chief military prosecutor at the Penkovsky trial, disclosed the action taken against the executed spy's Soviet associates in an interview with Izvestia, the Soviet Government's newspaper.

General Gorny said that the information passed to British and United States agents by Penkovsky "could not deal any serious damage to the defense potential of the Soviet Union."

The data, the prosecutor said, included "some technical reports by Soviet specialists who visited foreign countries and some scrappy information of a military nature that he succeeded in prying from his friends — chatterboxes — or from classified publications."

General Gorny added that Penkovsky had also transmitted "some separate materials of an internal political nature."

At the trial of Penkovsky, it was said that he had conveyed information about Soviet rockets, Soviet intentions regarding the conclusion of a German peace treaty, economic data on Eastern Europe and other secret data. Penkovsky



Sergei S. Varentsov

testified that he had handed over about 3,000 miniature frames of film of classified documents.

General Gorny denied reports that Penkovsky was the son-in-law of Chief Marshal of Artillery Mitrofan I. Nedelin, the head of Soviet strategic rocket forces who was killed in an air crash in October, 1960. The prosecutor said his father-in-law had been a "General 6 . . ." who had done political work in the army.

The prosecutor said that it had not been possible for Penkovsky to collect information about Soviet rocket weapons through his family connections. "Penkovsky managed to hand

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over to foreign intelligence officers fragmentary information on old models of rockets that he received when still serving in the army," General Gorny said.

Penkovsky, who held the rank of colonel at least until 1956, when he was assistant military attaché in Ankara, Turkey, was subsequently demobilized from the army.

In addition to former Marshal Varentsov, the prosecutor said that a Maj. Gen. A. Pozovny, a Col. V. Buzinov and V. Petrochenko, a member of the state scientific committee, had received strict disciplinary punishment. They were described as close acquaintances of Penkovsky who had given him classified information.

Describing the complaints against former Marshal Varentsov, the prosecutor said: "Varentsov was lowered in rank and position because, knowing Penkovsk during service at the front, he believed his complaints about alleged illegal expulsion from the ranks of the Soviet Army."

Varentsov insisted on a review of the negative service testimonial of Penkovsky and at the end helped him to join the State Committee for the Coordination of Scientific Research.

The former marshal is an alternate member of the Central Committee of the Communist party and a Deputy to the Supreme Soviet (Parliament). He was awarded the title of Hero of the Soviet Union in 1945.

He commanded Soviet artillery since 1955 and in 1961 was designated commander of both the artillery and tactical rocket forces assigned to support operations for the army.